

Hi! My name is Lesley Barrett. I'm running for the welfare and equality position on TUD Tallaght Campus.

I am a mature student currently in my final year studying social care. I have been the class Rep for my class during these 4 years and this year I've also been rep of school for Business and Humanities. Doing these roles has given me an excellent opportunity to fine tune my pre-existing skills and develop some new ones.

During my time as a class rep I have volunteered at many events throughout the college, including open days, the Christmas fair, and Volunteer day. This has given me an opportunity to meet many students, faculty members and distinguished visitors to the college. I have also been an active member at both class rep council and TUD student council. I have also been involved with USI campaigns and their government lobby day. In these instances, I have always been friendly and welcoming and represented my class and our college well. During my time as class Rep I have been involved in the student council I have actively participated in meetings and never been afraid to stand up and I speak my mind. I was involved with the student council during the formation of the new technological University of Dublin constitution. I have also been involved in discussions around more opportunities for mature students. I have organized and held one to one meetings with lectures on behalf of my class. I have also organized and had a meeting with the head of our Department on behalf of my class. Furthermore, I have attended the social care Department board meetings. All of these meetings can be uncomfortable as you are generally there because there are complaints and issues you're bringing on behalf of your class but I have never been afraid, or shied away from my responsibility to the students, and have always presented their issues professionally and in the strictest confidence. I have brought issues to the student union regarding facilities in Premier House as there needs to be consistency in availability of resources in Premier House if students are to continue having classes there. I am aware of the ongoing issues in Premier House and the work the current SU team has done on getting facilities upgraded/ improved. If elected this is an area I would continue to work on with the team to address.

I tell you all this because I think you have a right to know the kind of person I am and my experience as I hope to be transferring all these acquired skills and experiences to the role of welfare and equality officer and I firmly believe these experiences will stand to me in this role and as such will benefit the students.

Coming from a social care background I have an excellent understanding of the holistic needs of students. I am also firmly aware that some students face additional challenges every day, be they financial, childcare arrangements, living with a disability or many other issues which add barriers to them attending college. I am passionate about equity and equality for all students. As well as the everyday issues impacting student well-being and welfare, such as financial constraints, managing assignments, and accommodation, I am passionate about reinforcing positive mental health and tackling issues which impact upon this negatively. I applaud the

work our current welfare and equality officer has done and would like to build upon this if elected. I will fight on a local and national level for resources, funding, and supports that enable all students to have positive experiences in college.

Also, I have always considered myself, and strived to be a proud ally of the LGBTQAI+ community. I am very passionate about supporting LGBTQAI+ students and particularly passionate about gender recognition as I truly believe everyone has the right to live their truth and those from this community already face too many barriers so college life should not add to that. I am aware of some of the issues facing students from this community and if elected will give my all to supporting them in whatever way I can to tackle these issues.

Furthermore, I feel very strongly on issues facing students with disabilities, both visual and hidden. Again, these students often face many challenges and deserve to have supports and understanding and most importantly equity in their college life. Students with disabilities have often had negative experiences of formal education and college is an opportunity to leave negative experiences behind and build positive ones for their future, I am passionate about students having the necessary supports and facilities to accomplish whatever their ideals of college experience are to them.

I enjoy being part of a university with so much diversity in its walls. I think we should celebrate diversity and embrace it. If I was elected to the position of welfare and equality officer on Tallaght campus one thing I would like to see is more students from different ethnicities getting involved as class reps / student council members etc. so we can have good representation of all our students.

Being a class Rep and a school Rep hasn't always been easy, it can be difficult and challenging at times but I have always faced these challenges head on I never have been afraid to stand up and be the voice for my class, and for students in the School of Business and Humanities. Now I would like the opportunity to represent all students across our campus as your welfare and equality officer.

I don't have a magic wand so I won't make empty promises that I can make everything perfect for everyone, because that's simply not possible. What I can promise is, I firmly believe I am the best candidate for the job because I am passionate about welfare and equality, and passionate about student rights and wellbeing.

If you want someone who will give it their all for YOUR best interests, vote for me. If you are looking for a welfare and equality officer with excellent communication skills and professionalism vote for me. If you want a welfare and equality officer with a wealth of experience and knowledge for representing students, vote for me!

Finally, if you want welfare and equality officer who is not afraid to stand up and fight for issues IMPORTANT TO ALL students, then I ask you to "Believe in Barrett" and vote for me, Lesley Barrett number 1 for Welfare & Equality on election day! Thank you. (",)